

Read Through The Bible

Week 26 –July 28-Aug 3, 2024

1 Kings 14:21-22:53; 2 Kings 1:1-4:37; Acts 16:16-21:26; Palms 78, Proverbs 16

Icebreaker

- Who is the greatest leader you know? What makes them great?
- What is God's greatest attribute?
- What act of God most impresses you?
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Step 1 - GET REAL

What are you thankful for from the past week?

What struggles did you face?

What can you share from your personal Bible reading this week?

Where did you see God in your daily life?

Step 2: GET FED

1 Kings

1 Kings 14:22-24 22 *And Judah did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their fathers had done. 23 For they also built for themselves high places and pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree, 24 and there were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.*

Under Rehoboam, Judah returned to evil ways and went further than any group before. They did according to the nations before. How easy is it to slip into evil ways? How easy is it to follow previous groups? What would make the people turn away from good? How can we keep from turning to evil?

1 Kings 15:3-5 3 *And he [Abijam, king of Judah] walked in all the sins that his father did before him, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father. 4 Nevertheless, for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and establishing Jerusalem, 5 because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.*

Abijam did what was evil but God allowed him to still reign because of the promise to David. Why was a promise given to David? How could we be like David? How great would it be that God could say about us that we “did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life”?

1 Kings 15:11-14 11 *And Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as David his father had done. 12 He put away the male cult prostitutes out of the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. 13 He also removed Maacah his mother from being queen mother because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. And Asa cut down her image and burned it at the brook Kidron. 14 But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true to the LORD all his days.*

Asa was wholly true to the Lord all his days. What do you think made the difference between Asa and his father, Abijam? How can a son be so completely different from his father? In this passage, there is a key verse that will be important later in history. That word is “but”. “[b]ut the high places were not taken away”. What do you think kept Asa from completely destroying the places of false worship? How can we keep this from happening in our lives?

1 Kings 16:25 *and did more evil than all who were before him. [Omri]*

1 Kings 16:33 *Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.*

The kings of Israel progressively worsen. Why is this so often the case? How can we prevent this in our life? What can be done to break the cycle?

1 Kings 17 relates some of the story of Elijah the prophet and how God provided for him.

What provision of God have you seen in your life? How often do we attribute events in our life to God's providence? How often do we thank God for His providence?

1 Kings 18:17-18 *17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?" 18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father's house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the LORD and followed the Baals.*

How often do we see groups claiming other groups are the cause of all the trouble? How can we identify the true causers of trouble? What is usually the source of trouble? How can we be the cause of good rather than trouble?

1 Kings 18:21 *21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." And the people did not answer him a word.*

How likely are we to limp between two opinion? Are we wishy-washy? Do we hold to the truth in all cases or go with the wind of opinion or power? How can we follow God only?

1 Kings 18:37 *37 Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back."*

What would it take to show the world that God is the true God? What would it take today to turn our hearts back? How can we show the world that God is the true God?

1 Kings 19:14, 18 *14 He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." ... 18 Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."*

How often do we feel like Elijah, that we are the only one left doing God's will? Is this true? How can we encourage one another to do the will of God regardless of cost? How can we find the 7,000?

2 Kings

2 Kings 3:16-18 *16 And he said, "Thus says the LORD, 'I will make this dry streambed full of pools.' 17 For thus says the LORD, 'You shall not see wind or rain, but that streambed shall be filled with water, so that you shall drink, you, your livestock, and your animals.' 18 This is a light thing in the sight of the LORD. He will also give the Moabites into your hand,*

"A light thing in the hand of God." How great is our God? Who else could fill a stream with water without a storm? Who else would provide for His people? What is our view of God's capability? What is our view of God's provision for His people?

Acts

Acts 16:25 *25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them,*

Just wondering if I would be praying and singing hymns at midnight if I was in jail. How do you think Paul and Silas were able to pray and sing praises in jail?

Acts 17:5 *5 But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd.*

How does jealousy affect our actions? What is the antidote for jealousy? What makes you jealous?

Acts 17:11 11 Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; **they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.**

How eager are we for the word of God? Do we read it daily? Do we examine the Scriptures to see if what we are being taught is true? Should we be like the Thessalonians?

Acts 17:16 16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, **his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols**

What provokes our spirit today? What idols do we have? How are we opposing idols today?

Acts 17:24-31 24 **The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, 28 for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; 4 as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’ 29 Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”**

Perhaps one of the most important passages in the Scripture for our times today. How important is it that God made the world and man? How important is it for us to realize God gives us everything? How much do we owe God? How important is it for us to realize we are all made from one man? How would knowing this and living like this change our interactions? What is the aim on man according to Paul in verse 27? Are we seeking God? How will we find Him if we don’t seek Him? How important is it for us to repent? Why should we repent, according to Peter? Have you repented? How has God give us assurance that Jesus will judge us?

Acts 19:18-20 18 Also many of those who were now believers came, **confessing and divulging their practices. 19 And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.**

What do we have today that would compare to the magic arts and other practices of Ephesus? Why would these practices be banned by God? Do we practice any of these today? Are these innocent, harmless practices?

Acts 20:29-31 29 I know that after my departure **fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be alert...**

Is this still a problem today? How do we recognize these wolves? How can we prevent people from drawing away the disciples? How do we stay alert?

Acts 20:35 35 In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way **we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”**

Who are the weak? How can we help the weak? How are we doing in this matter? Are we takers or givers?

Acts 21:12-14 12 When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, **“What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” 14 And since he would not be persuaded, we ceased and said, “Let the will of the Lord be done.”**

How much are we willing to endure for God? Do you know of Christians suffering for Christ? Are you suffering? Do we have the attitude to “Let the will of the Lord be done.”? What if that will requires our life?

Psalms

Psalm 78:5-8 5 He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which **he commanded our fathers to teach to their children**, 6 that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, 7 so **that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments**; 8 and **that they should not be like their fathers**, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Are we telling our children the wondrous deeds God has done? What deeds should we tell our children? Why should we tell them? Where is our hope? Is our hope because of the teachings we received as children and since? How are we doing keeping the command of God?

Proverbs

Proverb 16:3 3 Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

Are we committing our work to the Lord?

Proverb 16:6 6 By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the LORD one turns away from evil.

How are we atoning for our iniquity? How do we turn away from evil?

Proverb 78:24 24 Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.

What are your words like?

Step 3: GET ACTIVE

- Review your conception of God's ability and character. Write the greatest thing you know God has done.
- List the negative effects of jealousy in our lives. Review your week and identify any times jealousy affected your life.
- Reread Psalm 78. Rehearse the great things God has done. List things God has done for you.
- Review your words. Are they gracious or harsh and grating? Make a list of five gracious words you will use this week in your interactions with others.

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